

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01

COME-00 TRSE-00 AS-01 /076 W
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O P 232300Z JAN 76

FM AMCONSUL CURACAO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2539

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY

COMNAVFORCARIB ROOSEVELT ROADS PR PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PDIP, MARR, NA

SUBJECT: GNA-MEP CONFRONTATION LOOMS. MEP LEADER DENOUNCES
DUTCH-BRITISH NAVAL EXERCISE.

REFS: 1) COMSECONDFLT 221808Z JAN 76 2) CURACAO 0018

1. POLITICAL TENSION ON ARUBA HAS INCREASED PERCEPTIBLY IN PAST
FOUR DAYS. ON JANUARY 20, ARUBA'S LT. GOV. TROMP REFUSED TO
PERMIT BETICO CROES, MEP PARTY BOSS AND ADVISER TO THE ISLAND
GOVERNMENT, TO ATTEND A CLOSED SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.
FRUSTRATED, CROES PROCEEDED TO ARUBA'S TELEVISION STATION R
DEMANDING AND RECEIVING IMMEDIATE AIR TIME TO ANNOUNCE QTE
MESSAGE OF IMPORTANCE TO ARUBAN COMMUNITY. UNQTE IN INTEMPERATE
LANGUAGE, CROES QTE WARNED UNQTE OF DANGER TO ARUBANS AND THEIR
POSSIBLE INDEPENDENCE POSED BY THE PRESENCE OF QTE FOREIGN UNQTE
WARSHIPS IN ARUBAN WATERS. HE DENOUNCED QTE SECRET UNQTE
MILITARY MANEUVERS BY A JOINT BRITISH/DUTCH TASK FORCE AS AN
ATTEMPT TO INTIMIDATE ARUBANS, AND PROCLAIMED: QTE NEITHER HOLLAND,
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THE GOVERNOR, THE PRIME MINISTER, NOR MARINE MANEUVERS CAN STOP

THE ARUBAN PEOPLE. NO MANEUVERS SHALL STAND IN THE WAY OF
OUR PEOPLE* UNQTE

2. COMMENT: BRITISH/DUTCH FLEET EXERCISE REFERRED TO IS OPERATION
CARIBREX 2-76, SCHEDULED SOME TIME AGO. EXERCISE WELL KNOWN
IN ADVANCE BY MEP LEADERSHIP SINCE FORMER FINMIN DE KORT (MEP)
SIGNED CLEARANCE REQUEST FOR BRITISH WARSHIPS. END COMMENT

3. LT. GOV. TROMP HAS SEQUESTERED A COPY OF BROADCAST. NA
ATTORNEY GENERAL NAHR HAS ALSO ASKED FOR A COPY TO STUDY FOR
POSSIBLE VIOLATIONS OF NA LAW.

4. ON JAN. 21, CROES ATTENDED OPEN MEETING OF ISLAND EXECUTIVE
COUNCIL AND ABUSIVELY INTERROGATED LT. GOV. TROMP CONCERNING HIS
SEIZURE OF BROADCAST TAPES, AND INSISTED FAULT FOR INCIDENT
LAY WITH TROMP FOR BARRING HIM FROM MEETING PREVIOUS DAY.
CROES REPORTEDLY BECAME SO VIOLENTLY ABUSIVE THAT TROMP HAD HIM
EVICTED FROM MEETING AND FILED OFFICIAL COMPLAINT WITH ARUBAN
POLICE.

5. JAN. 22, CROES CALLED PRESS CONFERENCE IN MEETING ROOM OF
ISLAND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ATTENDED BY FOUR MEP DEPUTIES. SITTING
IN LT. GOV.'S SEAT, CROES THREATENED TO QTE PARALYZE ISLAND
GOVERNMENT UNQTE ON TUESDAY (JAN. 27) IF MILITARY EXERCISE
CONTINUED. HE ALSO ANNOUNCED PLANS FOR GENERAL STRIKE IN PROTEST
PPA'S JOINING OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT TO COINCIDE WITH NEXT
STATEN MEETING. MEETING REPORTEDLY CALLED JAN. 27.
ACCORDING TO GNA SOURCES, CROES HAS BEEN CHARGED WITH TRESPASS
ON ISLAND COUNCIL'S PREMISES, BUT RELEASED.

6. CROES HAS CALLED PUBLIC MEETING IN DOWNTOWN ORANJESTAD
(ARUBA) FOR FRIDAY NIGHT, JAN. 23. ACCORDING GNA SECURITY
AUTHORITIES, CHANCES ABOUT EVEN THAT RESULTING DISTURBANCES
COULD QTE GET OUT OF HAND. UNQTE BRITISH ASSAULT CARRIER BULWARK
NOW IN CURACAO IN CONNECTION CARIBREX 2-76. SCHEDULED ETA
ARUBA JAN. 27 IN CONTINUATION EXERCISES (BELIEVED TO INVOLVE
LANDING TROOPS AND LAUNCHING HELICOPTERS ON ARUBA.)

7. COMMENT: GNA HAS ANNOUNCED INTENTION CONTINUE MANEUVERS
AS PLANNED. DECISION COULD HEIGHTEN TENSIONS, HOWEVER CANCELLATION
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NO SOLUTION AT THIS POINT, AND COULD OBVIOUSLY CREATE EVEN
GREATER PROBLEMS. CROES LATEST OUTBURST REPORTEDLY DISTURBING
MANY ARUBANS INCLUDING SOME OF HIS MORE RESPONSIBLE SUPPORTERS.
QUESTIONS HEARD CONCERNING HIS MENTAL STABILITY. SO FAR PM
EVERTSZ AND OTHERS HAVE REMAINED COOL AND TRIED TO AVOID MAKING
CROES A MARTYR. EDITORIAL COMMENT ON LATEST DEVELOPMENTS
UNIFORMLY CRITICAL, ACCORDING ONE NEWSPAPER QTE EXTREMELY
INFANTILE. UNQTE

8. IN LARGE MEASURE, EFFECT ON ARUBAN INDEPENDENCE BID
DEPENDENT ON HOW CROES EVENTUALLY EMERGES FROM THIS CONFRONTATION.
LOSING THIS ONE WILL WEAKEN HIS STRANGLEHOLD ON ARUBAN
POLITICS AND DIMINISH HIS ROLE IN NA AFFAIRS ACCORDINGLY.

9. CONGEN WILL BE ALERT TO POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS FOREGOING FOR
NETHERLANDS ANTILLES VISIT BY U.S. NAVY VESSELS SCHEDULED
EARLY FEBRUARY.
HANSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SUMMARIES, POLITICAL SITUATION, POLITICAL LEADERS, NAVAL EXERCISES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976CURACA00032
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760027-0293
From: CURACAO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760129/aaaaayxx.tel
Line Count: 125
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 CURACAO 18
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <13 MAY 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GNA-MEP CONFRONTATION LOOMS. MEP LEADER DENOUNCES DUTCH-BRITISH NAVAL EXERCISE.
TAGS: PINT, PDIP, MARR, NA, NL, (CROES, BETICO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006